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Subject: Letter to Secretary Zinke re: EO on Monuments
Date: Friday, April 28, 2017 1:40:30 PM
Attachments: [Letter to Sec of DOI on EO 4.28.17.pdf](#)

Dear Secretary Zinke;

Attached is NCAI's letter from President Cladoosby urging the Department of the Interior to protect the Bears Ears National Monument and retain its National Monument designation throughout this Administration. Your consideration of our request would be greatly appreciated. If we can provide any additional information please let us know.

Sincerely,
Jackie Pata

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NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

April 26th, 2017

Secretary Zinke
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington DC 20240

Re: Urging the Protection of Bears Ears National Monument

Dear Secretary Zinke,

On behalf of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) the oldest, largest, and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization serving the broad interests of tribal governments and communities, we write you today to urge the Department of the Interior to protect the Bears Ears National Monument and retain its National Monument designation throughout this Administration.

On April 26th, President Trump signed an Executive Order ordering the Department of the Interior to review prior National Monument designations and suggest changes or modifications to the monument proclamations. During the Department of Interior's review of National Monuments, we ask that the Bears Ears National Monument continue to stand as a permanent National Monument. We ask that the Department of Interior conduct meaningful government-to-government consultation directly with Tribes impacted regarding the Bears Ears designation and all other National Monuments that are under review.

As you know, many of the National Monuments were established specifically to protect American Indian cultural and archaeological resources. In fact, the original purpose of the Antiquities Act was to protect the archaeological sites at Mesa Verde, which is today a National Park and World Heritage Site. Another example is the Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument established in a cooperative agreement with the Cochiti Pueblo.

The Bears Ears National Monument is an example of how co-management between Inter-Tribal Coalitions and Federal agencies can work to protect public lands for all Americans. Tribal leaders from Hopi, Navajo, Ute Mountain Ute, Zuni and Uintah & Ouray Ute formed the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition with the goal of protecting and preserving the homeland area of the Bears Ears region. The Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition aims to secure permanent protection for these lands. NCAI's membership strongly supports the intent of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition to continue to permanently secure the Bears Ears National Monument designation. See NCAI Resolution EC-15-002 attached.

Since time immemorial, the Bears Ears and surrounding land in Southeastern Utah have been a homeland and place of spiritual and cultural significance to tribal people. Tribal people rely on these public lands to maintain traditional livelihoods and cultural practices, such as hunting, gathering, and ceremonial uses. In your Senate Confirmation Hearing as well as your hearing in the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, you stressed the importance

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of accessing public lands for hunting. We ask that you use your authority as Secretary to ensure that the First People of the Bears Ears area are allowed to continue hunting in their traditional homeland by keeping Bears Ears a National Monument.

We understand that The Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition has extended an invitation for you to visit the National Monument. We urge you to visit Bears Ears and hear from the Hopi, Navajo, Ute Mountain Ute, Zuni and Uintah & Ouray Ute directly to fully understand why Bears Ears should remain a National Monument.

In addition to visiting in person, we ask you to conduct meaningful government-to-government consultation with the impacted tribal governments of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition on the effects of any agency action on the National Monument designation. In addition to consulting directly with the Tribes of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition, we ask that the Department of Interior conduct government-to-government consultation with affected tribes for all National Monuments under review as a part for this Executive Order. NCAI stands ready to work with you and your staff to make the consultation process productive and effective. We greatly appreciate your commitment to working with Tribal Nations to protect the great American Indian cultural resources of the United States.

We urge The Department of Interior to protect the decision made to reserve the Bear Ears area as a National Monument for the generations to come.

If you would like more information, please contact NCAI Executive Director Jacqueline Pata at jpata@ncai.org or by phone at 202-466-7767.

Sincerely,



Brian Cladoosby
President
National Congress of American Indians